

WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

The minutes of the Full Parish Council meeting held on Monday 13th July 2020 at 7.15pm.

Present (remotely via Zoom): Councillors Bassinette (in the chair), Lewis, Richardson, Sutherland-Rogers, Sutton and Winyard.

Also in attendance (remotely via Zoom) was one (1) members of the public, Mr. Mark Knight – Parish Clerk, Mr. Simon Ashton – Responsible Financial Officer, Cllr. D Beavan – District Councillor and Cllr. R Smith – County Councillor.

040/20-21 Chairman's welcome.

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

041/20-21 To consider and approve any apologies for absence.

None

042/20-21 Declaration of Interest and Requests for Dispensation.

None.

043/20-21 Open Forum

One member of the public asked for a confirmation of the amount of the transfer from the WPC to WCLC for the Heritage Hut renovation. It was **AGREED** that this item would be addressed under the ATP agenda item.

There was also a question about the format of the submissions of the WPC to East Suffolk Council planning department to ensure that it was clear that the PAG report, if submitted, was done so only as the Council's recommendation not a separate submission. This was confirmed and the Clerk added that he would submit a separate email for each planning application to ensure that there would be no confusion.

044/20-21 To receive a report from County Councillor Richard Smith

Cllr. Smith reported that Suffolk County Council had transformed itself in light of the current Covid-19 health crisis. Endeavour House is closed to most staff and the Council has refocussed on Covid-19 responsibilities. The situation has been a shock financially with £76m of expenditure being incurred involving PPE purchases, care homes and continuity grants. Central government has reimbursed some, but there still remains a £14m shortfall. This amount has been taken from reserves with the hope that central government will reimburse more in the future.

Cllr. Smith also paid tribute to the hard work under difficult circumstances of the County Council staff.

Signed.....

Dated.....

He reported that no care home had run out of PPE, but that the market price of this equipment had been high.

He announced that an opposition motion had been discussed seeking the County Council to oppose Sizewell C development. Although he abstained on the motion, he said that he would vote against Sizewell C having come to the conclusion that it was impossible to protect the environment and the transport essential for the economy of Suffolk from a development of this scale. He felt, however, that it would be difficult to get enough Councillors to change their backing since particularly those in the western part of Suffolk did not have a clear understanding of the extraordinarily negative impact of the development.

It was discussed that EDF had gone ahead with filing the DCO even though the lockdown made it much more difficult for the public to engage in a meaningful way. The public had only until end September to respond to the 55,000 page DCO. Thereafter, the Secretary of State had a further three months to comment. If this is then approved, then EDF would have to present a funding package of likely £20bn over the 10 to 15 years of the project.

045/20-21 To receive a report from East Suffolk District Councillor David Beavan

Cllr. Beavan reported that the District Council are drawing down on reserves in order to deal with the Covid-19 situation. The track and trace strategy is being implemented with concerns over a second wave. He felt that excessive centralisation, rather than allowing the local level to manage, increased the risks.

Civilian parking enforcement across the area started on the 6th April. Residents who see offending vehicles are encouraged to take photos and use the reporting tool on the East Suffolk Council Parking website.

He confirmed that the anti-social behaviour experienced in Walberswick including with regard to excessive litter on the beaches was a common problem across the area.

In terms of Sizewell, he said that the District Council Green and Liberal Democrat councillors had formally come out in opposition to the Sizewell C development.

046/20-21 To consider the minutes of the meetings of 8th and 29th June 2020

The minutes of the 8th June 2020 were **APPROVED** with the Chairman to sign a copy of the minutes and to retain them until they can be handed to the Clerk in person.

The Chairman informed the members present that the minutes of the 29th June 2020 extraordinary meeting had not been posted in time and therefore consideration would be **POSTPONED** until the next Council meeting.

Signed.....

Dated.....

047/20-21 Finance Matters 2019/20

047/20-21.1 Review & Approval of SALC Internal Auditor's Report

The report was **APPROVED**. The Responsible Financial Officer was thanked for all his hard work with this process and that the Council was extremely happy to have received such a positive report from the internal auditor.

047/20-21.2 Review & Approval of SALC Internal Auditor's Report & Action Plan

It was **NOTED** that the internal auditor had made no recommendations and only three comments and the members present accepted that there was adequate provision in the action plan prepared by the RFO to address these minor issues. The report was then **APPROVED**.

047/20-21.3 Review & Approval of Statement of Accounts

The Council expressed appreciation for the high quality of the accounts. The Responsible Financial Officer reported that the statement was drawn from the reports regularly submitted to the Council and that this made the preparation straight forward. The Statements of Accounts were **APPROVED** unanimously.

047/20-21.4 Review & Approval of Re-presented Bank Reconciliation

The Responsible Financial Officer reported that this re-presenting was necessary due to take into account a £60 check that was now being removed from the balance. The report was then **APPROVED** unanimously.

047/20-21.5 Review & Approval of AGAR Section 1 Annual Governance Statement

The Chair explained that there needed to be wet signatures of the Clerk, RFO and Chairman and how this was being handled in line with remote meetings.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement and for the Proper Officer and Chairman to sign.

047/20-21.6 Review & Approval of AGAR Section 2 Accounting Statements

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** section 2 of the Annual Accounting Statement and for the Responsible Financial Officer and Chairman to sign.

047/20-21.7 Review & Approval of AGAR Section 2 Explanation of Variances

The report was presented and the Responsible Financial Officer reported that items 3 and 6 pertaining to miscellaneous income and miscellaneous expenditure

Signed.....

Dated.....

could be broken down further for additional clarity. The report will therefore be represented. The report was then **APPROVED** subject to the requested amendments taking place.

047/20-21.8 Review & Approval of Notice of Public Rights

It was reported that the schedule of the Exercise of Electors' Rights would run from the 20th July to the 28th August 2020. The Parish Clerk would publish this on the website and Cllr. Winyard would post it on the notice board. It was also noted that the Village Hall Committee had agreed to make the Annex available on an exceptional basis during the Covid shutdown in the event that a member of the Public should wish to examine the accounts. This would be via appointment as outlined on the Notice. The Notice of Public Rights was then **APPROVED**.

048/20-21 Finance Matters 2020/21

048/20-21.1 Approve items on the Authorisation to Pay Sheet

The Responsible Financial Officer explained the difference of £54.95 in the transfer to the WCLC of the Heritage Hut funds held by the Council was to account for the purchase of the post box and keys that were bought and installed in the Heritage Hut during the previous year. The Clerk was reminded that he should make a submission, as necessary to the District Council to take account of the original grant provided by Suffolk Coastal for the Heritage Hut.

It was confirmed that, because of the hiatus of Council meetings during August, the salary payments to the Clerk and RFO for August would be made at the September meeting unless there was an extraordinary meeting in August.

The Authorisation to Pay Sheet was then **APPROVED** and relevant Councillors approved to make the online payment once notified by the Clerk that the transactions were inputted.

048/20-21.2 Confirmation of receipt of Allotment Fees (£189) and VAT Refund (£2,356.80) June 2020

The payments and claims were explained and **CONFIRMED**. It was **NOTED** that the next VAT claim would be for the last three quarters of the year covering 9 months.

048/20-21.3 Approval of Appointment of Internal Auditor

SALC was **APPROVED** as the internal auditor for the 2020/1 year. It was noted that although this decision was being taken in March in previous years, it made good sense to approve the next year's internal auditor at the same meeting that the internal audit report itself was considered.

Signed.....

Dated.....

049/20-21 To adopt the Complaints Policy

This policy had been amended to take out information that had personalised to the person in the Clerk's position and instead make it role based. It was **AGREED** to **ADOPT** the policy as presented.

050/20-21 To discuss and agree a response concerning the consultation on the new Code of Conduct.

Cllr. Lewis reported that the current Code of Conduct had not been updated since 2012 and that this consultation process encouraged both the Council as a whole and individual councillors to reply. The response to the questionnaire was discussed and finalised by Cllr Lewis and it was **RESOLVED** by the Council to submit the questionnaire on behalf of the Council and for a copy of the completed questionnaire to be published with the draft minutes of meeting.

051/20-21 Follow up on a request from a member of the public concerning light pollution from commercial lighting in Southwold Harbour.

The Parish Clerk gave an update on the issue. The Clerk of Southwold had been contacted to form a joint approach and both Clerk's contacted East Suffolk Council planning department to see if there had been any breach of the planning consent, which there had not. The Environmental Health team, also at East Suffolk Council, were then contacted to see if this was an issue which would be detrimental to the living standards of a resident. ESC said that this was not eligible as light pollution was not being one of the standards measured.

Cllr. Beavan advised that the impact on wildlife in the area would be the next best chance of resolving the issue, and that another direct request to the company in question might yield some results. It was also suggested that the business owner could put hoods on the lights to make the beams more focussed and therefore not as much of a nuisance. The Parish Clerk stated that he would contact the Clerk of Southwold and try this method.

052/20-21 To resolve to add the Council's name to a letter to the Secretary of State with regard to the DCO consultation on Sizewell.

It was **RESOLVED** to add the Council's name to this letter and the Chairman agreed to inform the organisers to add Walberswick's name to that of other Councils.

053/20-21 To discuss recent antisocial behaviour on Walberswick beaches.

Cllr. Bassinette gave a report on the recent return to the beaches by a large number of people after the easing of lock down restrictions. It was confirmed that Walberswick was suffering from the same spate of anti-social behaviour as other beach communities and that the WPC, the WCLC and the Car Parks (WCPL) were working together with a number of Villagers to try to mitigate the impact. Cllr Bassinette confirmed that on behalf of the Council, she had also contacted Suffolk police and ESC Parking enforcement.

Signed.....

Dated.....

A number of proposals were discussed including using the Village News to update the residents on the situation, providing information on how residents can inform ESC and the Police as necessary, working with the other Village organisations to improve signage (including location of the public toilets). It was agreed that Cllr Bassinette would write an article for the upcoming Village News.

054/20-21 Oral Updates from Councillors on areas of responsibility if relevant.

054/20-21.1 Footpath and Highways

An incident was reported on the footpath that runs along the estuary from the Ferry Crossing to the Bailey bridge in which a member of the public was run off the footpath by a cyclist. Cllr Sutherland-Rogers had been in touch with Suffolk Highways who would provide 'No cycling' signs to be posted on this footpath.

054/20-21.2 GDPR, SALC and Website

Cllr. Lewis has received training for the upcoming accessibility legislation which will come into force on 23rd September 2020. This would need to be reflected in both a large number of small changes to the way in which the website is presented and in an accessibility statement approved by the Council.

054/20-21.3 Litter

This had been discussed in the earlier agenda item on anti-social behaviour.

054/20-21.4 Playing Fields and the Green play area

It was reported by Cllr. Sutton that one of the swings on the Village Green had now become unsafe to use and was taken out of use. The Clerk was asked if the contractor could move forward the date for replacement already agreed. The Clerk reported that the contractor was now back working after an extensive furlough and a September installation would be achievable. The Clerk was also asked about the upcoming ROSPA inspection. This was scheduled for September and October of this year, but no exact date would be given for what is a surprise inspection. It was agreed that the Safety Committee would look at both sets of swings on the Green and take a decision if others had to be taken out of use until the new set was installed.

054/20-21.5 Safe Spaces and Car Parks

None.

054/20-21.6 Heritage Hut

None.

Signed.....

Dated.....

054/20-21.7 Sizewell and other power related developments

This subject had already been dealt with under the appropriate agenda item above.

055/20-21.8 Neighbourhood Plan

None.

055/20.21 Oral Committee Reports if relevant

Nothing for the meeting.

056/20-21 Date and Time of next meeting was confirmed as Monday 14th September 2020 at 7.15 pm.

In addition to the next regular meeting, the Chairman said that an extraordinary meeting would be needed on the 27th July 2020 in order to deal with a new planning application received.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

DRAFT

Signed.....

Dated.....